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Security Council

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Letter dated 18 October 2006 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of France in July 2006 (see annex). This assessment was prepared under my responsibility following consultations with the other members of the Council.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **de La Sablière**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 October 2006 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of France (July 2006)

Under the presidency of Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, the Security Council engaged in an extensive programme of work. During the month of July, the Council held 24 closed consultations of the whole, 5 open meetings, 11 formal meetings, 4 private meetings and 3 public meetings. It adopted five resolutions and issued six presidential statements.

Africa

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Elections

The Security Council held a public session on 6 July to discuss the report of the Council's mission on the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, led by Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière, which was in Kinshasa from 10 to 12 June 2006 (S/2006/434). The Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in his remarks, expressed the historic importance of the upcoming elections in his country. Those elections reflected the wish of the citizens of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to turn the page on a long transition period and give their country sustainable democratic institutions.

Sanctions

On 20 July, Ambassador Oswaldo de Rivero presented the report of the sanctions committee on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which he chairs. The report notes in particular the continuing illicit activities by armed groups present in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the role that the illegal exploitation of certain natural resources plays in financing arms trafficking.

The Security Council adopted its resolution 1698 (2006) on 31 July, renewing the arms embargo and the sanctions regime in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for one year. The resolution provides for the Council to examine before February 2007 two reports which will contain recommendations on measures to address the illegal exploitation of national resources and the humanitarian impact that the application of such measures may have. Resolution 1698 (2006) also authorizes the sanctions committee to impose the personal sanctions referred to in resolution 1596 (2005) on individuals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo who recruit or employ children in situations of armed conflict in violation of applicable international law and who commit serious violations of international law involving the targeting of children in situations of armed conflict.

Sudan

Darfur

During his consultations on 12 July, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, briefed the Security Council on the talks the Secretary-General had had at the African Union summit in Banjul on the situation in the Sudan and the region. The conflict in Darfur was the main focus of concerns. He said it was essential to support the reinforcement of the African Union mission and convince the Sudanese Government to go along with its transformation into a United Nations operation.

Sanctions

Ambassador Adamantios Vassiliakis presented the interim report of the sanctions committee on the Sudan, which he chairs. He reported on the progress in the work of the Group of Experts and the discussion in the committee on how to carry out the work of the Group in the new context that had arisen with the signing of the Abuja peace accord.

Resolutions 1653 (2006) and 1663 (2006) (the Lord's Resistance Army)

Mr. Nhlapo, Director of the Africa I Division in the Department of Political Affairs, presented the Secretary-General's report (S/2006/478) on 28 July. The report was submitted in compliance with requests from the Security Council in its resolutions 1653 (2006) and 1663 (2006). Mr. Nhlapo said that the humanitarian situation remained critical in northern Uganda even though peace talks had just started with the Lord's Resistance Army rebels. The Council agreed to convene an experts' meeting at an appropriate moment to discuss possible further action.

Central African Republic

On 7 July, General Lamine Cisse, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, briefed the Security Council on the situation in the Central African Republic. He underlined the risks of destabilization of the country owing to internal factors and rising tensions in the region, in particular between Chad and the Sudan. A representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Titov, addressed the Council in that regard.

The members of the Council expressed their serious concern about the economic, social and security situation in the Central African Republic, as well as the deterioration of the situation in the whole region. They adopted a press statement underlining those concerns.

Somalia

On 10 July, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. He expressed concern about the increasing influence of the Islamic Courts and underlined that the situation in Somalia had reached a critical point.

The members of the Council focused on the perspective of a limited modification of the arms embargo to enable the transitional federal institutions to develop Somalia's security sector. They also expressed their readiness to consider an

exemption to the embargo to pave the way for the possible deployment of an Intergovernmental Authority for Development/African Union peace support mission. They adopted a presidential statement after the meeting.

Liberia

On 13 July, the Security Council adopted its resolution 1694 (2006), which increased the authorized size of the civilian police component of the United Nations Mission in Liberia by 125 and decreased the authorized size of its military component by 125.

Guinea-Bissau

On 20 July, the Security Council held consultations with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Its members encouraged national dialogue in the country, expressed their concern about the deterioration of the economic and social situation and about the humanitarian consequences of the military operations carried out in spring in the north and called upon the international community to increase its support to Guinea-Bissau. A press statement was issued at the end of the meeting.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 19 July, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement urging all the Ivorian parties to implement the decisions taken in Yamoussoukro on 5 July and requesting the International Working Group to report to it on its assessment in that regard.

On 26 July, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the High Representative for the Elections briefed the Council on the obstacles to the normal functioning of the mobile courts after the calls made by some political leaders, and on the violence perpetrated by organized groups. The members of the Council reiterated their full support for the Prime Minister, encouraged him to continue his efforts in implementing the road map and condemned the obstacles to the peace process. At the end of their consultations, they issued a press statement that announced the future adoption of a presidential statement.

Ethiopia/Eritrea

On 27 July, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the implementation of resolution 1681 (2006), noting in particular that the drawdown of troops of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea would be completed by 31 August. The members of the Council underlined the need to take into account the global situation in the region, in particular in Somalia.

Asia

Timor-Leste

On 19 July, Special Representative Ian Martin briefed the Security Council on the situation in Timor-Leste and the perspective for a future United Nations presence there, following the assessment mission he conducted. The Special Representative

underlined the recent stabilization, with the appointment of Ramos Horta as Prime Minister, and the many challenges lying ahead. He stressed the importance of a long-term commitment on the part of the international community and underlined the need for a United Nations mission with a police component in Timor-Leste.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Letter dated 4 July 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/481)

On 15 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1695 (2006), which was introduced as a text of the presidency. The resolution condemns the multiple launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of ballistic missiles on 5 July 2006 local time and demands that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile programme and, in this context, re-establish its pre-existing commitments to a moratorium on missile-launching. It requires all Member States to exercise vigilance and prevent the transfer of items and financial resources in relation to the missile or weapons of mass destruction programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The resolution also supports the six-party talks, calls for their early resumption and urges all the participants to intensify their efforts towards the full implementation of the 19 September 2005 joint statement.

Afghanistan

On 26 July, the Security Council held a private meeting with Special Representative Tom Koenigs. The Special Representative underlined the deteriorating security situation, while at the same time noting that progress on reconstruction and development was going on in most parts of the country.

Council members stressed the necessity of a continued engagement of the international community in favour of Afghanistan, in the framework of the Afghanistan Compact. The need for improved regional cooperation in order to tackle the challenges facing Afghanistan was also underlined. The Council issued a press statement after the meeting.

Middle East

Iraq/Kuwait — Kuwaiti property

The Security Council held private consultations on 5 July to hear the presentation by the High-level Coordinator of the twenty-second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999) on the return of all Kuwaiti property, including archives, seized by Iraq. The members of the Council welcomed the return by Iraq to Kuwait of the Kuwaiti property found on Iraqi aircraft based in Tunisia. They regretted the absence of any results in finding the Kuwaiti archives and urged the concerned authorities to do their utmost to contribute to bringing about the settlement of that sensitive issue.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Following the public debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, held on 30 June 2006 at the request of the Arab Group, the members of the Security Council discussed a draft resolution presented by Qatar to condemn the firing of rockets from Gaza into Israel and the large-scale military assault carried out by Israel in the Gaza Strip. The Council voted on the draft resolution on 13 July. Ten members voted in favour, four abstained and a permanent member of the Council voted against, thus preventing the adoption of the resolution.

The Council held a public debate on 21 July on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. All participants expressed concern about the situation in the region following the eruption of the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah on 12 July and the continuing deterioration of the situation in the Gaza Strip. No action was taken following the debate.

The situation in the Middle East/Lebanon

The Security Council held almost daily consultations on the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah that had erupted after the abduction of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah on 12 July. The members of the Security Council received regular briefings of various officials from the Secretariat. At the request of Qatar, the Council held a public debate on the situation in Lebanon on 14 July. The members of the Council discussed possible action on proposals for a cessation of hostilities, but no decision was taken.

Following a briefing by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hedi Annabi on 26 July, the Council discussed a draft presidential statement presented by China on the killing of four United Nations observers by Israeli shelling in southern Lebanon on 25 July. The presidential statement was adopted on 27 July (S/PRST/2006/34). The Council expressed deep shock and distress at the firing by the Israel Defense Forces on the United Nations observation post and called upon the Government of Israel to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into the incident.

On 29 July, the Council received a draft resolution presented by France calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. The members of the Council began discussions on the draft resolution.

The Council held an emergency meeting on 30 July after the Israeli shelling of the Lebanese village of Qana. It adopted the same day a presidential statement, by which it expressed shock and distress at the incident, which had caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mainly children (S/PRST/2006/35). The Council also called for an end to violence and underscored the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire.

On 31 July, the Council unanimously adopted a draft resolution presented by France renewing the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for one month (resolution 1697 (2006)).

Europe

Georgia

On 11 July, Nino Burjanadze, Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, addressed the Security Council in a private meeting. That meeting was followed by informal consultations, during which Special Representative Heidi Tagliavini briefed the Council on the recent developments in Abkhazia, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General. Mrs. Tagliavini underlined the intensification of the contacts between the parties, especially the resumption of the work of the Coordinating Council. Members of the Security Council called on parties to engage more actively in the political process, to implement their commitments and to refrain from actions which could undermine that process.

On 27 July, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations briefed Council members on the operation launched by Georgia in the upper Kodori Valley.

Kosovo (Serbia)

Resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

On 13 July, Vojislav Kostunica, Prime Minister of Serbia, addressed the Security Council in a private meeting. That meeting was followed by informal consultations, during which Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari briefed Council members on the advancement of the discussions on the future status of Kosovo (Serbia). He announced a high-level meeting between the parties, due to take place in Vienna at the end of July.

Children in armed conflict

On 24 July, the Security Council held an open debate on children in armed conflict. Radikha Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, briefed the Council on progress made in the implementation of resolution 1612 (2005). Ann Veneman (Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund), Ad Melkert (Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) and Ian Bannon (Acting Director of Social Development, World Bank) presented the work that their organizations were doing to support the monitoring and reporting mechanism and to protect and provide opportunities for children affected by armed conflict. Marie-Madeline Kalala (Minister for Human Rights, Democratic Republic of the Congo) briefed the Council on progress in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A presidential statement was agreed in which the Council reiterated its commitment to address the widespread impact of armed conflict on children and its determination to ensure respect for and implementation of its resolution 1612 (2005) and all its previous resolutions on children and armed conflict, which provided a comprehensive framework for addressing the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

Non-proliferation

On 31 July, the Security Council adopted resolution 1696 (2006) by 14 votes to 1. The resolution was introduced by France, Germany and the United Kingdom. It calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran, without further delay, to take the steps required by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and demands, in this context and as a mandatory requirement, that Iran shall suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development. It expresses the conviction that this would contribute to a diplomatic, negotiated solution, underlines the willingness of the international community to work for it and encourages the Islamic Republic of Iran to re-engage with the international community and IAEA. The resolution is placed under Article 40 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to make mandatory the suspension required by IAEA. It requests, by 31 August, a report from the Director General of IAEA to the IAEA Board of Governors and, in parallel, to the Council for its consideration.

Working methods of the Security Council

On 19 July, the members of the Security Council endorsed a note by the President of the Security Council (S/2006/507) summarizing the achievements in the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions since January.